

The Hollow * Of Her Hand eorge Barr McCutcheon



CHAPTER XIX

The Hollow of Her Hand.

When Booth called in the afternoon at Sara's apartment, he was met by could see no one-not even him. The doctor had been summoned during the night and had returned in the morning, to find that she had a very high temperature. The butler could not enlighten Booth further than this, except to add that a nurse was coming in to take charge of Mrs. Wrandall, more for the purpose of watching her symptoms than for anything else, he believed. At least, so the doctor had said.

Two days passed before the distressed young man could get any deflnite news concerning her condition. He unconsciously began to think of it as a malady, not a mere illness, due of course to a remark Carroll had that she isn't withoutdropped when Sara had told him the whole truth of the tragedy and of her own vindictive plans. It was Carroll himself who gave a definite report of Sara. He met the lawyer coming away from the apartment when he called to inquire.

'She isn't out of her head, or anything like that," said Carroll uneasily, "but she's in a bad way, Booth. I'll he. tell you what I think is troubling her more than anything else. Down in her his wife. heart she realizes that Hetty Castleton has got to be brought face to face with the Wrandalls."

"The deuce you say!"

"Today I saw her for the first time Almost immediately she asked me if I thought the Wrandails would treat Hetty fairly if they ever found out the truth about her. I said I thought they would. I didn't have the heart to tell her that their grievance undoubtedly would be shifted from Hetty to her, and that they wouldn't be likely to forgive her for the stand she'd taken. She doesn't seem to care, however, what the Wrandalls think of her. By the way, have you any influence over Hetty Castleton?"

"I wish I were sure that I had," said Booth.

"Do you think she would come if you sent her a cablegram?"

"I am going over-" "She will have your letter in a couple of days, according to Sara, who seems to have a very faithful correspondent in the person of that maid. I shudder to think of the cable tolls in the past few months! I sometimes | the number of her new apartment?" wonder if the maid suspects anything more than a loving interest in Miss Castleton. What I was about to suggest is this: Couldn't you cable her on Friday saying that Sara is very ill?

"I will cable, of course, but Sara must not know that I've done it." "Can you come to my office tomor-

row afternoon?" "Yes. Tomorrow night I shall go over to Philadelphia, to be gone till Friday. I hope it will not be necessary for me to stay longer. You never can tell about these operations."

"I trust everything will go well. Several things of note transpired

before noon on Friday,

This is Tuesday."

The Wrandalle arrived from Europe, without the recalcitrant colonel. Mr. Redmond Wrandall, who met them at the dock, heaved a sigh of relief.

He will be over on the Lusitania. next sailing," said Leslie, who for some reason best known to himself wore a troubled look,

Mr. Wrandall's face fell. "I hope not," he said, much to the indignation



Met the Lawyer Coming Away From the Apartment.

of his wife and the secret uneasiness of his son. "These predatory connections of the British nobility-

"Predatory!" gasped Mrs. Wrandall. are a blood-sucking lot." went on trade! the old gentleman firmly. "If he comes to New York, Leslie, I'll stake my head he won't be long in borrowing | well over against the windows with | thy lawyer could not well meet for the a few thousand dollars from each of her back to the light. The visitor us. And he'll not seek to humiliate us stopped short in surprise. She had by attempting to pay it back. Oh, 1 know them."

Leslie swallowed rather hard. "What's the news here, dad?" he asked hastily. "Anybody dead?"

"Sara is quite ill, I hear. Slow fever of some sort, Carroll tells me."

"Is she going to marry Brandy ; Booth?" asked his son.

Mr. Wrandall's face stiffened. fear I was a little hasty in my conclusions. Brandon came to the office a the news that she was quite ill and few days ago and informed me in rather plain words that there is absolutely nothing in the report."

"The deuce you say! 'Gad, I wrote her a rather intimate letter-" Leslie got no farther than this. He was for you." somewhat stunned and bewildered by his private reflections.

Mr. Wrandall was lost in study for some minutes, paying no attention to the remarks of the other occupants of the motor that whirled them across detached sort of way. "How is she

"By the way, my dear," he said to his wife, a trifle irrelevantly, "don't you think it would be right for you flush suffused her face, a shy smile apand Vivian to drop in this afternoon | peared in her eyes. "She is receiving and see Sara? Just to let her know

"It's out of the question, Redmond." said his wife, a shocked expression in her face as much as to say that he must be quite out of his head to suggest such a thing, "We shall be dreadfully busy for several days, unpacking and-well, doing all sorts of necessary things."

"She is pretty sick, I hear," mumbled "Hasn't she got a nurse?" demanded

"I merely offered the suggestion in

"Well, we'll see her next week. Any

other news?" "Mrs. Booth, Brandon's mother, was

operated on for something or other day before yesterday. "Oh, dear! The poor thing! Where?"

"Philadelphia, of course." "I wonder if-let me see, Leslie, isn't there a good train to Philadelphia at four o'clock? I could go-" "Really, my dear," said her hus-

band sharply.

"You forget how busy we are, mother," said Vivian, without a smile. "Nonsense!" said Mrs. Wrandall, in considerable confusion, "Was it a seri-

ous operation, Redmond?" "They cut a bone out of her nose, that's all. Brandon says her heart is

weak. They were afraid of the ether. She's all right, Carroll says." "Goodness!" cried Mrs. Wrandall, One might have suspected a note of

disappointment in her voice. "I shall go up to see Sara this after-

noon," said Vivian calmly. "What's "You have been up to see her, of course," said Mrs. Wrandall acidly. He fidgetted. "I didn't hear of her

illness until yesterday.' "I'll go up with you, Viv," said Les-

"No, you won't," said his sister flatly. "I'm going to apologize to her for something I said to Brandon Booth.

You needn't tag along, Les." At half-past five in the afternoon, the Wrandall limousine stopped in front of the tall apartment building near the park, a footman jerked open the door, and Miss Wrandall stepped out. At the same moment a telegraph messenger boy paused on the sidewalk to compute the artistic but puzzling numerals on the imposing grilled doors

of the building. Miss Wrandall had herself announced by the obsequious doorman, and stood by in patience to wait for the absurd rule of the house to be carried out: "No one could get in without being announced from below,"

said the doorman. "I c'n get in all right, all right," said the messenger boy, "I got a tellygram for de loldy."

"Go to the rear!" exclaimed the doorman, with some energy.

White Miss Wrandall waited in Sara's reception hall on the tenth floor. the messenger, having traversed a more devious route, arrived with his message.

Watson took the envelope and told him to wait. Five minutes passed. Miss Wrandall grew very uncomfortable under the persistent though complimentary gaze of the street urchin. He stared at her, wide-eyed and admiring, his tribute to the glorious. She and reproving, her tribute to the grotesque

"Will you please step into the draw ing-room, Miss Wrandall," said Watson, returning. He led her across the small foyer and threw open a door. She passed into the room beyond.

Then he turned to the boy who stood beside the hall seat, making change for a quarter as he approached. 'Here," he said, handing him the receipt book and a dime, "that's for you." He dropped the quarter into his own pocket, where it mingled with coins that were strangers to it up to that instant, and imperiously closed the door behind the boy who failed to but could not find the opportunity. say "thank you." Every man to his

There was a woman in the drawingroom when Vivian entered, standing expected to find her sister-in-law in bed, attended by a politely superior

person in pure white. "Why, Sara," she began, "I am so

glad to see you are up and-" The other woman came forward "But I am not Sara, Miss Wrandall,"

How do you do?" Vivian found herself looking into the face of Hetty Castleton. Instantly she extended her hand.

"This is a surprise!" she exclaimed. When did you return? Leslie told me your plans were quite settled when he saw you in Lucerne, Oh, I see! Of course! How stupld of me. Sara sent

"She has been quite Ill," sald Hetty, non-committally, "We got in yesterday. I thought my place was here, naturally." "Naturally," repeated Vivian, in a

today? May I see her?" "She is very much better. In fact, she is sitting up in her room." A warm



Vivian Found Herself Looking Into the Face of Hetty Castleton.

two gentlemen visitors, to be perfectly honest, Miss Wrandall, her lawyer, Mr. Carroll, and-Mr. Booth.' They were seated side by side on

the uncomfortable Louis Seize divan in the middle of the room.

'Perhaps she won't care to see me. after an audience so fatiguing," said Miss Wrandall sweetly, "And so exasperating," she added, with a smile. Hetty looked her perplexity.

"But she will see you, Miss Wrandall-if you don't mind waiting. It is a business conference they're having.

An ironic gleam appeared in the corner of Vivian's eye. "Oh." she said. and walted. Hetty smiled uncertainly. All at once the tall American girl was impressed by the wistful, almost humble look in the Englishwoman's eyes, an appealing look that caused her to wonder not a little. Like a flash she jumped at an obvious conclusion, and almost caught her breath. This girl loved Booth and was losing him! Vivian exulted for a moment and then with an impulse she could not quite catalogue, laid her hand on the other's slim fingers, and murmured somewhat hazily: "Never mind, never mind!"

"Oh, you must wait," cried Hetty, not at all in touch with the other's mood. "Sara expects to see you. The men will be out in a few minutes."

"I think I will run in tomorrow morning," said Vivian hastily. She arose almost immediately and again extended her hand. "So glad to see you back again, Miss Castleton. Come and see me. Give my love to Sara."

She took her departure in some haste, and in her heart she was rejoic ing that she had not succeeded in making a fool of herself by confessing to Sara that she had said unkind things about her to Brandon Booth.

Hetty resumed her seat in the broad French window and stared out over the barren treetops in the park. A her lips. It had been there most of

the day. In Sara's boudoir, the doors of which were carefully closed, three persons were in close, even repressed confer ence. The young mistress of the house sat propped up in a luxurious chaiselounge, wan but intense. Confronting stared back occasionally, narrow-eyed here were the two men, leaning for ward in their chairs. Mr. Carroll heid n his hand a number of papers, prominent among them being three or four telegrams. Booth's face was radiant despite the serious matter that occu pied his mind. He had reached town early in the morning in response to a telephone message from Carroll announcing the sudden, unannounced appearance of Hetty Castleton at his offices on the previous afternoon. The girl's arrival had been most unexpect ed. She walked in on Mr. Carroll, ac companied by her mald, who had a distinetly sheepish look in her eyes and seemed cager to explain something

> With some firmness, Miss Castleton had asked Mr. Carroll to explain why the woman had been set to spy upon her every moment, a demand the worgood and sufficient reason that he wasn't very clear about it himself Then Hetty broke down and cried. confessing that she was eager to go to Mrs. Wrandall, at the same time sobbing out something about a symbolic dicky-bird, much to Mr. Carroll's wonder and perplexity.

He sent the maid from the room,

she said, in a well-remembered voice. | and retired with Miss Castleton to the | I will not turn against one or the oth- | was in them. Her warm, red lips purtwithout much preamble be informed satisfy a personal grievance? How do her that he knew everything. Moreover, Mr. Booth was in possession of love with you at this veryall the facts and was even then on the point of starting for Europe to see her. Of course, his letter had failed to reach her in time. There was quite a tragic scene in the seclusion of that emote little office, during which Mr. Carroll wiped his eyes and blew his nose more than once, after which he took it upon himself to dispatch a messenger to Sara with the word that he and Miss Castleton would present themselves within half an hour after his note had been delivered.

The meeting between Sara and Hetty was affecting. . . . Almost immediately the former began to show the most singular signs of improvement. She laughed and cried and joyously announced to the protesting nurse that she was feeling quite well again! And, in truth, she got up from the couch on which she reclined and nsisted on being dressed for dinner. In another room the amazed nurse was frantically appealing to Mr. Carroll to let her send for the doctor, only to be confounded by his urbane announcement that Mrs. Wrandall was as "right as a string" and, please God, she wouldn't need the services of doctor or nurse again for years to come. Then he asked the nurse if she had ever

neard of a disease called "nostalgia." She said she had heard of "homesickness.

"Well, that's what ailed Mrs. Wrandall," he said. "Miss Castleton is the cure.

Booth came the next morning. Even as she lay passive in his arms, Hetty denied him. Her arms were around his neck as she miserably whispered that she could not, would not be his wife, notwithstanding her love for him and his readiness to accept her as she was. She was obdurate, lovingly, tenderly obdurate. He would have despaired but for Sara, to whom be afterwards appealed.

'Wait," was all that Sara had said, but he took heart. He was beginning to look upon her as a sorceress. A week ago he had felt sorry for her; his heart had been touched by her transparent misery. Today he saw her in another light altogether; as the determined, resourceful, calculating

could not feel sorry for her today Hetty deliberately had placed herself in their hands, withdrawing from the conference shortly before Vivian's arrival to give herself over to gloomy conjectures as to the future, not only for herself, but for the man she loved and the woman she worshiped with something of the fidelity of a beaten dog.

At a later conference participated in by Sara, Booth and Mr. Carroll, the old lawyer spoke plainly.

'Now are you both willing to give serious consideration to the plan I propose? Take time to think it over. No harm will come to Miss Castleton, I am confident. There will be a nine days' sensation, but, after all, it is the best thing for everybody. You propose living abroad, Booth, so what are the odds if-"

"I shan't live abroad unless Hetty reconsiders her decision to not marry me," said the young man dismally. 'Gad, Sara, you must convince her that I love her better than-"

"I think she knows all that, Brandon. As I said before, wait! And now, Mr. Carroll, I have this to say to your suggestion: I for one am relebtlessly opposed to the plan you advocate. There is no occasion for this matter to frightened, pathetic droop returned to go to the public. A trial, you say would be a mere formality. I am not so sure of that. Why put poor Hetty's head in the lion's mouth at this late stage, after I have protected her so carefully all these months? Why, take the risk? We know she is innocent Isn't it enough that we acquit her in our hearts? No, I cannot consent, and

I hold both of you to your promises." "There is nothing more I can say my dear ,Sara," said Carroll, shaking his head gloomily, "except to urge you to think it over very seriously. Remember, it may mean a great deal to her-and to our eager young friend here. Years from now, like a bolt from the sky, the truth may come out in some way. Think of what it would mean then."

Sara regarded him steadily. "There are but four people who know the truth," she said slowly. "It isn't likely that Hetty or Brandon will tell the story. Professional honor forbids your doing so. That leaves me as the sole peril. Is that what you would imply, my dear friend?"

'Not at all," he cried hastily, "not at all. 1-"

"That's all tommy-rot, Sara," cried Booth earnestly. "We just couldn't have anything to fear from you."

With curious inconsistency, she shook her head and remarked: "Of course, you never could be quite easy in your minds. There would always be the feeling of unrest. Am I to be trusted, after all? I have proved myself to be a vindictive schemer. What

innermost of his private offices, where er of you some time and crush you to ed in a dear little smile of surrender. you know, Brandon, that I am not in

"Good heavens, Sara!" he cried,

agape. "- at this very moment?" she continued. "It would not be so very strange, would it? I am very human. The power to love is not denied me. Oh, I am merely philosophizing. Don't look so serious. We will suppose that | eyes. continued along my career as the woman scorned. You have seen how i smart under the lash. Well?"

"But all that is impossible," said Booth, his face clearing. "You're not in love with me, and never can be That! for your philosophy!"

At the same instant he became aware of the singular gleam in her eyes; a liquid, oriental glow that seemed to reflect light on her lower had been conscious of the mysterious, for ever. Love is light." seductive appeal. He stared back at her, almost defensively, but her gaze did not waver. It was he who first looked away, curiously uncomfortable.

"Still," she said slowly, "I think you would be wise to consider all possible contingencies.'

"I'll take chances, Sara," he said, with an odd buoyancy in his voice that, for the life of him, he could not explain, even to himself.

"Even admitting that such should turn out to be the case," said Mr. Car roll judicially, "I don't believe you'd this strange thing that lies here in my go so far as to put your loyal friends in jeopardy, Sara. So we will dismiss yours. But the brain is a rebel. I the thought. Don't forget, however, that you hold them in the hollow of lie in wait for a chance to overthrow your hand. My original contention was based on the time-honored saying, 'murder will out.' We never can tell what may turn up. The best laid plans of men and mice oft-

Sara settled back among the cushions with a peremptory wave of her hand. The loose, flowing sleeve fell away, revealing her white, exquisitely modeled arm almost to the shoulder. For some strange, unaccountable reason Booth's eyes fell.

"I am tired, wretchedly tired. It has been a most exhausting day," she said, with a sudden note of weariness in her voice. Both men started up apologetleally. "I will think seriously of woman who, having failed to attain a your plan, Mr. Carroll. There is no certain end, was now intensely, keenly hurry, I'm sure. Please send Miss interested in the development of an- Wrandall in to me, will you? Perhaps his arms. other of a totally different nature. He you would better tell Hetty to come in as soon as Vivian leaves back tomorrow afternoon, Brandon. 1 shall be much more cheerful. By the way, have you noticed that Dicky, out in the library, has been singing all afternoon as if his little throat would to announce me by telephone. Silly split? It is very curious, but today is the first time he has uttered a note in nearly five months. Just listen to him! He is fairly riotous with song."

Booth leaned over and kissed the hand she lifted to him. "He is like the rest of us, Sara, inordinately happy." A slight shiver ran through her arm. He felt it.

"I am so afraid his exuberance of spirit may annoy Vivian," said she, with a rare smile. "She detests vulgarity." The men departed. She lay back in

the chaise-lounge, her eyes fixed on the hand he had touched with his lips. Watson tapped twice on the door. "Miss Wrandall could not wait ma'am," he said, opening the door soft-

ly. "She will call again tomorrow." "Thank you, Watson, Will you hand me the cigarettes?"

Watson hesitated. "The cigarettes, ma'am?" "Yes." "But the doctor's orders, ma'am, beg-

ging your pardon for-' "I have a new doctor, Watson." "I beg pardon, ma'am!" "The celebrated Doctor Folly," she

said lightly.

CHAPTER XX.

Hetty in a troubled voice. "I feel that

Sara Wrandall's Decision. "Now, you see what I mean, Brandon, when I insist that it would be a mistake for you to marry me," said

Sara will not let me go.' "That's pure nonsense, Hetty," he said. "She wants you to marry me, I am positive." He may have thought his tone convincing, but something caused her to regard him rather fixedly, as if she were trying to solve an

elusive puzzle. He took her by the arm and raised her to her feet. Holding her quite close, he looked down into her questioning eyes and said very seriously:

"You are suspicious, even of me dearest. I want you. There is but one way for you to be at peace with yourself; shift your cares over to my shoulders. I will stand between you and everything that may come up to trouble you. We love one another. Why should we sacrifice our love for the sake of a shadow? For a week, dearest, I've been pleading with you; won't you end the suspense todayend it now-and say you will be my

The appeal was so gentle, so sincere, so full of longing that she wavered. Her tender blue eyes, lately so full of assurance can you and Hetty have that sweetness of love, and capitulation commending it.

"You know I love you," she said tremulously.

He kissed the lovely, appealing lips, not once but many times.

"God, how I worship you," he whispered passionately. "I can't go on without you, darling. You are life to me. I love you! I love you!"

She drew back in his arms, the shadow chasing the light out of her

"We are both living in the present, we are both thinking only of it, Brandon. What of the future? Can we foresee the future? Dear heart, I am always thinking of your future, not my own. Is it right for me to bring you-

"And I am thinking only of your future," he said gravely. "The future that shall be mine to shape and to make glad with the fulfilment of every promise that love has in store for both lids as she sat there with her face in of us. Put away the doubts, drive out the shadow. Once or twice before he | the shadows, dearest. Live in the light

"If I were only sure that my shadows would not descend upon you, I-" He drew her close and kissed her again.

"I am not afraid of your shadows. God be my witness, Hetty, I glory in them. They do not reflect weakness, but strength and nobility. They make you all the more worth having. I thank God that you are what you are, dear heart."

"Give me a few days longer, Brandon," she pleaded. "Let me conquer brain. My heart is yours, my soul is must triumph over it, or it will always this little kingdom of ours. Today I have been terrified. I am disturbed. Give me a few days longer."

"I would not grant you the respite, were I not so sure of the outcome," he said gently, but there was a thrill of triumph in the tones. Her eyes grew very dark and soft and her lips trembled with the tide of love that surged through her body. "Oh, how adorable you are!" he cried, straining her close

in a sudden ecstasy of passion. The doorbell rang. They drew apart, breathing rapidly, their blood leaping with the contact of opposing passions, their flesh quivering. With a shy, sweet glance at him, she turned toward the door to await the appearance of Watson. He could still feel her in

A drawling voice came to them from he vestibul lie Wrandall entered the library, pulling off his gloves as he came.

"Hello," he said glibly. "I told that fellow downstairs it wasn't necessary arrangement, I say. Why the devil should they think everybody's a thief or a book agent or a constable with a subpoena? He knows I'm one of the family. I'm likely to run in any time, I told him, and- Oh, I say, I'm not butting in, am I, Miss Castleton?"

He shook hands with both of them, and then offered his eigarette case to Booth, first selecting one for himself. Hetty assured him that he was not detrop, sheer profligacy on her part in view of his readiness to concede the point without a word from her.

"Nipping wind," he said, taking his stand before the fireplace. "Where is Sara? Never mind, don't bother her.



Booth Kissed the Hand She Lifted to Him.

I've got all the time in the world. By the way, Miss Castleton, what is the

latest news from your father?" "I dare say you have later news than I," she said, a trace of annoyance in

her manner. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Are Spices Injurious?

According to Dr. Gigon of Baesl, spices are a much abused constituent of the diet. He claims that instead of being injurious they are, as a rule, beneficial to the human system inasmuch as they stimulate the flow of saliva and of the gastric juices, thereby furthering digestion. Resides tho aromatic spices-ginger, cinnamon. cloves, pepper, etc.-he adds and recommends sait. This last item is taboo by many dietitlans. One of the leading sanatoriums of the country dread, grew moist with the ineffable that for years condemned it is now